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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/931,689	08/16/2001	Wolfgang Werner	MUH-11086	3332

7590

12/19/2002

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EXAMINER

FARAHANI, DANA

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2814

DATE MAILED: 12/19/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/931,689

Applicant(s)

WERNER, WOLFGANG

Examiner

Dana Farahani

Art Unit

2814

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 October 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2, 5 and 6 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3 and 4 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. The rejections made in the previous Office Action are overcome by applicants' argument filed on 10/7/02

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1, 5, and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Yamaguchi et al., hereinafter Yamaguchi (U.S. Patent 5,321,281), in view of Burke (U.S. Patent 5,793,070), both newly cited.

Yamaguchi discloses in figure 2 an IGBT with a doped semiconductor substrate 1 of a first conductivity type; a drift zone 32 of the first conductivity type on the substrate; and first and second well regions 2 and 3 of different conductivity types disposed between the drift zone and the substrate.

Yamaguchi does not disclose, in the figure, that the well regions are heavily doped and the substrate and the drift zone are lightly doped.

Burke discloses changing the doping of semiconductor layers changes their resistivity (see column 6, lines 36-39). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to change the doping of the layers in Yamaguchi in order to change the resistance of those layers in the IGBT.

4. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamaguchi in view of Burke, as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Shekar et al., hereinafter Shekar (U.S. Patent 5,317,171), a newly cited reference.

Yamaguchi discloses the limitations in claims 1 and 2, as discussed above, except for a cathode and an anode surrounding the IGBT cell at a distance at an edge of the drift zone.

Shekar discloses in figure 4 a thyristor device which operate similar to an IGBT device (see column 4, lines 27-29), and has anode and cathode at a distance at an edge of drift zone 130. Shekar also discloses that by applying a voltage to the anode, a regenerative action takes place, and the cathode helps to stop this regenerative action (see column 4, lines 34-47; and column 5, lines 25-27). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include an anode and a cathode in Yamaguchi's structure in order to further control the flow of current in the different layers of the IGBT device, particularly the drift zone.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claim 3 and 4 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

6. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

The primary reason for indications of allowability of claims 3 and 4 is inclusion therein of the limitation of the two well zones shorted together.

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-4 have been considered but are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection.

Briefly reciting, applicants argue that in the Japanese patent, cited in the previous Office Action, the well zones are not shorted together as claims 3 and 4 recite.

In reply to applicants argument that claims 5 and 6 are method claims, therefore, should be given patentable weight, note that those claims depend upon a device claim and that is the reason why they cannot have process limitations in them.

Product-by-Process Limitations

While not objectionable, the Office reminds Applicant that "product by process" limitations in claims drawn to structure are directed to the product, per se, no matter how actually made. *In re Hirao*, 190 USPQ 15 at 17 (footnote 3). See also, *In re Brown*, 173 USPQ 685; *In re Luck*, 177 USPQ 523; *In re Fessmann*, 180 USPQ 324; *In re Avery*, 186 USPQ 161; *In re Wethheim*, 191 USPQ 90 (209 USPQ 554 does not deal with this issue); *In re Marosi et al.*, 218 USPQ 289; and particularly *In re Thorpe*, 227 USPQ 964, all of which make it clear that it is the patentability of the final product per se which must be determined in a "product by process" claim, and not the patentability of the process, and that an old or obvious product produced by a new method is not

patentable as a product, whether claimed in "product by process" claims or otherwise.

Note that applicant has the burden of proof in such cases, as the above case law makes clear. Thus, no patentable weight will be given to those process steps which do not add structural limitations to the final product.

Therefore, in claims 5 and 6, the method of making IGBT is given no patentable weight.

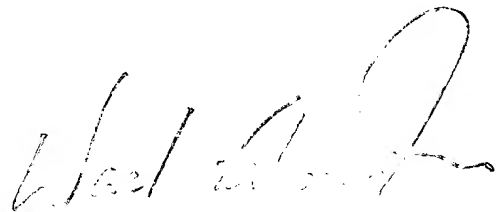
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dana Farahani whose telephone number is (703)305-1914. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:00AM - 6:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wael Fahmy can be reached on (703)308-4918. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)872-9318 for regular communications and (703)872-9319 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-0956.

Dana Farahani
December 15, 2002


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